

CLAIM LISTING:

Claims 1-69: (Cancelled)

70. (Previously presented) A method of killing or inhibiting the proliferation of extracellular microorganisms within the respiratory tract of an animal, the method comprising the steps of:

providing a flow-controlled source of nitric oxide gas;

delivering the nitric oxide gas to the animal's respiratory tract through inhalation; and wherein the inhalation of nitric oxide gas results in direct exposure of nitric oxide gas to the microorganisms within the respiratory tract.

71. (Previously presented) The method of claim 70 wherein the nitric oxide gas is delivered through spontaneous breathing of the animal.

72. (Previously presented) The method of claim 70 wherein the nitric oxide gas is delivered through a ventilator.

73. (Previously presented) The method of claim 70 wherein the nitric oxide gas flows from a pressurized cylinder containing nitric oxide gas.

74. (Previously presented) The method of claim 70 further comprising the step of diluting the nitric oxide gas, prior to inhalation.

75. (Previously presented) The method of claim 70 wherein the flow of nitric oxide gas from the flow-controlled source of nitric oxide gas is regulated by a valve.

76. (Previously presented) The method of claim 75 wherein the nitric oxide gas flows from a nitric oxide substrate source containing a compound capable of producing nitric oxide gas.

77. (Previously presented) The method of claim 70 wherein the nitric oxide gas is delivered in a continuous flow.
78. (Previously presented) The method of claim 70 wherein the nitric oxide gas is delivered in pulsed-doses.
79. (Previously presented) A method of suppressing a respiratory infection associated with microorganisms within the respiratory tract of an animal, the method comprising the steps of:
- providing a pressurized source of nitric oxide gas;
 - diluting the nitric oxide gas;
 - delivering the diluted nitric oxide gas to the animal by inhalation resulting in direct exposure of nitric oxide gas to microorganisms within the animal's respiratory tract.
80. (Previously presented) The method of claim 79 wherein the nitric oxide gas is diluted with air.
81. (Previously presented) The method of claim 79 further comprising the steps of monitoring a concentration of the nitric oxide gas.
82. (Previously presented) The method of claim 79 wherein the nitric oxide gas is delivered through a ventilator.
83. (Previously presented) The method of claim 79 further comprising the step of providing for a nasal cannula to interface with the animal wherein nitric oxide gas is inhaled through the nasal cannula.
84. (Currently amended) The method of claim 79 wherein the nitric oxide gas is delivered in pulsed-doses.
85. (New) The method of claim 79 wherein the nitric oxide gas is diluted with an oxygen containing gas.

86. (New) A method for treating an animal having pathogenic microorganisms in the respiratory tract of the animal comprising the step of delivering by the inhalation route to the respiratory tract of the animal an amount of nitric oxide gas effective to kill or inhibit the proliferation of said pathogenic microorganisms.
87. (New) The method of claim 86 wherein the microorganisms are selected from the group consisting of pathogenic bacteria, pathogenic parasites and pathogenic fungi.
88. (New) The method of claim 87 wherein the microorganisms are pathogenic mycobacteria.
89. (New) The method of claim 88 wherein the microorganism is *M. tuberculosis*.
90. (New) The method of claim 86 wherein the animal is a human.
91. (New) The method of claim 86 wherein the delivering step comprises directly exposing the pathogenic microorganisms in the respiratory tract of the animal to said nitric oxide gas.
92. (New) The method of claim 91 wherein said nitric oxide gas has a cidal effect on the pathogenic microorganisms.
93. (New) The method of claim 92 wherein the animal is a human.
94. (New) The method of claim 86 wherein the delivering step comprises delivering a gas mixture comprising nitric oxide gas in a concentration of at least about 25 parts per million.
95. (New) The method of claim 86 wherein the delivering step comprises delivering a gas mixture comprising nitric oxide gas in a concentration of less than about 100 parts per million.
96. (New) The method of claim 95 wherein the concentration of said nitric oxide in the gas mixture is between about 25 and 90 parts per million.

97. (New) The method of any of claims 94, 95 or 96 wherein the animal is a human.
98. (New) The method of claim 97 wherein the gas mixture is delivered to the respiratory tract of the animal for a time period of at least about 3 hours.
99. (New) The method of claim 97 wherein the gas mixture is delivered to the respiratory tract of the animal for a time period of between about 3 and 48 hours.